

**DISEASES OF THE HEART AND CIRCULATION—**Second, Revised and Enlarged Edition—Paul Wood, O.B.E., M.D. (Melbourne), F.R.C.P. (London), Director, Institute of Cardiology, London. J. B. Lippincott Company, Philadelphia, 1956. 1005 pages, \$15.00.

This is one of the finest works on diseases of the heart available to the English-speaking physician and should be in the library of every physician whether student, general practitioner or specialist. The author is director of the Institute of Cardiology in London and writes from a wealth of personal experience, both clinical and investigative. One of the most striking features of the book is the lucid, precise manner in which the author expresses his position so that his comments are made in the fewest possible words. The style permits an amazing amount of information to be incorporated in a relatively short space.

Particularly outstanding are the many illustrations showing venous pulse tracings, phonocardiograms, electrocardiograms, radiograms and other illustrations which bring the subject matter into sharp focus. The chapter on physical signs is superb, probably the finest discussion of physical signs of heart disease in the literature. The chapter on congenital heart disease is particularly comprehensive, authoritative, and reflects the author's major contributions in this important field. The same may be said for the chapter on chronic rheumatic heart disease, particularly that dealing with mitral valvular disease.

Dr. Wood has integrated the findings at the bedside with more modern investigations, such as cardiac catheterizations, angiography, and phonocardiography, and at all times has emphasized the bedside-clinical approach to the patient.

The chapter on special investigations brings the reader up to date on all the current methods of studying patients, including dye dilution curves, arterial pulse tracings, cardiac catheterization, angiography, phonocardiography, and respiratory function studies. There is a critical appraisal of each of the techniques.

If one were to suggest sections that could be expanded in future editions, one might include the following: (1) In the management of heart failure where there is an inadequate discussion of the biochemical and metabolic disturbances associated with the treatment of heart failure; (2) the section on the details of the use of ganglionic blocking agents in hypertension could be expanded; (3) the details of the management of the complications of ischemic heart disease; (4) discussion of peripheral vascular disease. It is perhaps natural that these relative deficiencies in space have occurred because the book is intensely personal, describing the author's own experiences. The areas of his own research, in which important recent contributions have been made, have received major emphasis.

Each chapter is followed by an excellent international bibliography, including the titles; the selection of references has been particularly good.

It is predicted that this book will have a wide audience and will have a significant impact on the approach to cardiology in this country. The reviewer recommends the book most highly, and believes it is a classic in the field.

\* \* \*

**CLINICAL PATHOLOGY—Application and Interpretation—Second Edition—**Benjamin B. Wells, M.D., Ph.D., Director of Clinical Investigation, The Lynn Clinic, Detroit. W. B. Saunders Company, Philadelphia, 1956. 488 pages, 25 figures, \$8.50.

This book, now in its second edition, deals with the interpretation of clinical laboratory studies. Its purpose is entirely practical. The topics are selected and developed as they pertain to the more urgent and frequent needs of medical practice; the material is arranged as the physician uses it. Beginning with a clinical problem, useful laboratory tests

are named and discussed. An attempt is made to include enough theory and methodology to give proper meaning to the procedures and to define their limitations.

The text has been extensively rewritten to reflect developments of the five years which have passed since the first edition. A short chapter, which has been added on laboratory methods, can be of use to medical students and doctors interested in performing their own office and bedside tests. A discrepancy worthy of note: certain of the details of methods given in this chapter vary from those given for the same tests in the 12th edition of *Clinical Diagnosis by Laboratory Methods*, of which Dr. Wells is a co-author and which is a companion book to the one under review.

In the introductory considerations, the author expresses his desire to teach the practitioner three things about the laboratory procedures that he uses: (1) when to use them; (2) how to interpret the results; and (3) what technical or physiologic restrictions must be taken into account in the interpretation. Throughout the book he makes an earnest effort to discuss tests and their results as they apply to a large number of common clinical problems and he keeps in mind the limitations of average office and hospital practices.

We feel that the author has done a very sensible job in his interpretation of laboratory tests. Stated simply, his book suggests what tests are practical to use, under what circumstances they should be used, and which tests are not practical and why. It brings the doctor up to date on a large number of procedures and evaluates their present practical worth, their difficulties and cost. It is highly recommended.

EDGAR WAYBURN, M.D.

\* \* \*

**PRACTICAL DERMATOLOGY—**Samuel M. Peck, B.S., M.D., Associate Clinical Professor of Dermatology, Columbia University; with Laurence L. Palitz, M.D., Ph.D., Attending Dermatologist, Long Island Jewish Hospital. Landsberger Medical Books, Inc., Blakiston Division, McGraw-Hill Book Co., New York, 1956. 380 pages, \$7.00.

This is a concise, handy text, useful for quick reference in the field of dermatology. There are 380 pages. The discussion of treatment of various dermatoses is handled intelligently and with thoroughness. There are not enough pictures and many of the pictures utilized are blurred or in poor focus or do not reveal detail.

This book does not offer anything in a unique way; it is a conventional text, of which there are many already in print superior to this one.

\* \* \*

**NOTES ON ATOMIC ENERGY FOR MEDICAL OFFICERS—**An Introduction to the Subject—Royal Naval Medical School, Alverstoke, Hampshire, England. Philosophical Library, 15 E. 40th St., New York 16, N. Y., 1956. 169 pages, \$4.75.

This textbook or manual for the British Navy doctors starts in a very elementary way. It is brief but aims to cover the essential physics and biology as well as the effects of nuclear weapons. Although there is a chapter on the hydrogen bomb, no other references are made to writings later than 1950, and the text suggests that this is the time it was written. Some of the brief presentations of difficult ideas are very good, but in other places they appear to suffer from the author's lack of complete familiarity with his subject. Some quantitative statements are at variance with what is generally accepted, e.g. that 50 r doubles mutation rate in *Drosophila* (it presumably does in mice). The half value layers for barriers to protect from 3 Mev gamma rays appear exaggerated by half. Several appendices provide pertinent quantitative data. Line drawings illustrate the text and a dozen halftones are gathered just before the short index.

R. R. NEWELL, M.D.